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ESM

Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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1902

January 1902

“Studies in the Gospel Message. The Hope of the Promise” The Missionary Magazine 14, 1.

EJW

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When Paul stood before Agrippa, to answer for his faith, he briefly stated the chief experiences of his life, and then said: “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.... why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? *Acts 26:6-8. MISM January 1902, page 14.1*

From this it is evident that the promise of God to the fathers, in which Paul, together with all faithful Israelites, had hope, was the promise of the resurrection from the dead. In *1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17*, as well as other passages, the Apostle Paul tells us plainly that the resurrection of the dead takes place at the coming of the Lord. Therefore we know that the promise of God to the fathers was the promise of His coming, and that this was the hope of the people of God from the earliest times. *MISM January 1902, page 14.2*

This is corroborated by the words of Peter in the third chapter of his second epistle: “There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” This shows that the scoffers know of a promise made to the fathers, but do not believe there is any prospect of its fulfillment. *MISM January 1902, page 14.3*

The writings of the apostle Paul are especially full of references to the Lord's coming. Some critics have referred to this in somewhat

the same manner as the scoffers mentioned by Peter. For, say they, Paul thought that Christ was coming in his day, and he came not, and there is no more evidence that he will ever come. Such talk, however, discredits the entire Bible; for the prophecies of the Old Testament and the Psalms abound with anticipation of that most joyful event. A careful study of the prophecies will enable one to see that the near coming of the Lord has been the blessed hope of God's people in every age since the fall, and that in this they were justified by the Lord himself.*MISM January 1902, page 14.4*

From the time that Eden was lost, its restoration at the coming of the Lord has been the one thing set before men. The prophecies are so full of it that the disciples firmly expected it when they recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah. So they asked him after his resurrection, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He did not tell them that that was a vain hope, but said, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." And a little later on Peter spoke with confidence of the coming of Christ; saying, "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began."*MISM January 1902, page 15.1*

This restoration "at the first began to be spoken by the Lord" himself, before Adam and Eve left the garden; for God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." The bruising of the head of the serpent, that is, the destruction of Satan, means the end of sin, so here we have the promise of the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.*MISM January 1902, page 15.2*

In all the early prophecies of Christ's coming, the event alone was mentioned, without any reference to the time of it. So Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," seeing the prevailing wickedness, said, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all." And his faith in that event was so strong and practical, that by it he was translated without seeing death, as thousands will be when the Lord comes. God is not partial, and the fact that Enoch was translated shows that every

man living on the earth at that time might have been translated, if he had had the same faith. That is, the Lord would have come in the days of Enoch, if the world had been ready to receive him. *MISM January 1902, page 15.3*

We pass over several hundred years, to the days of Abraham, who was preeminently the father to whom the promises were made. The promise was that he should be the heir of the world (*Romans 4:13*), yet God “gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession,” even “an everlasting possession.” *Acts 7:5; Genesis 17:8*. This manifestly involves the resurrection, since God cannot lie; and Abraham so understood it, for he died in faith, looking for a heavenly country, and a “city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” *Hebrews 11:10, 16. MISM January 1902, page 15.4*

In making the covenant with Abraham, and promising to give him the land, God said that his seed should be afflicted in a strange land for four hundred years. “But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace: thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” Here we have the first time prophecy concerning the coming of the Lord. If Israel had been faithful to the trust committed to them, the resurrection would speedily have taken place on their deliverance from Egypt. *Psalms 81:13-15*. For Moses was born about the time of the promise which God swore to Abraham; and the oath of God to Abraham was that all his enemies, including of course the last one, death, should be destroyed. *MISM January 1902, page 15.5*

But Israel did not believe, and so did not enter in, and therefore God spoke by David of “another day,” saying, “To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” For hundreds of years the promise was open, and the Lord would have come any day that the consecration and faithfulness of his people had prepared the world for His coming. *MISM January 1902, page 16.1*

It was this “blessed hope” of the Lord’s coming that in every age cheered the hearts of the few faithful ones who were looking for it. It

was this hope that was Job's anchor in the overwhelming sea of trouble that threatened to sweep him away, for he said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." And again, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." *MISM January 1902, page 16.2*

David, full of joyful hope, said: "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." *Psalms 96:11-13. MISM January 1902, page 16.3*

Isaiah, with burning lips, said: "O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence.... For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." *Isaiah 64:1-4*. And elsewhere he tells us what will be the effect of the Lord's coming upon the two classes here mentioned, his adversaries, and them that wait for him. *MISM January 1902, page 16.4*

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: ... The idols He shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth. for fear at the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." *Isaiah 2:11-21*. But it shall also be said in that day,—the day when God will "swallow up death in victory"

and “wipe away tears from off all faces,”—“Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” *Isaiah 25:9.MISM January 1902, page 16.5*

Jeremiah, at the word of the Lord, stood in the gate of Jerusalem, and said to the people, as they passed in and out, “It shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, ... then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, ... and this city shall remain for ever.” “But if ye will not hearken unto me, ... then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.” *MISM January 1902, page 16.6*

But all the promises, warnings, and exhortations by the mouth of the prophets were unavailing, and at last Jerusalem was destroyed, and Israel was carried captive to Babylon. While there the Lord gave Daniel a vision of events reaching to the time of the end. Although the events noted in these visions covered hundreds of years, the language was in such terms that Daniel did not understand it, and when he asked the Lord how long it would be until the end of these things, the reply was, “Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” God would not have his people relax their diligence through the thought that his coming was hundreds of years in the future; so he left the time indefinite, in order that each generation might regard it as imminent, and live in harmony with the words of Christ, “Watch, for ye know not at what hour your Lord will come.” *MISM January 1902, page 17.1*

Paul was favored with wonderful revelations, and we know that, like Jesus, he preached the prophecies of Daniel (*2 Thessalonians 2*). But since God had said that the *time* was sealed up until the time of the end, we know that he would not reveal it to Paul any more than to Daniel. So Paul’s earnest desire was to depart and be with Christ, whose coming was his principal theme. How he expected to be with the Lord, he makes clear in *1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17*: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be

caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”*MISM January 1902, page 17.2*

And now we have come to the time of the end. The prophecies of Daniel have been unsealed; many have turned to and fro in them, and knowledge of them has been increased. The signs which Christ gave have been fulfilled, so we know that He is near, even at the door. We know not the day nor the hour, but we do know that “yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”*MISM January 1902, page 17.3*

“He which testifieth of these things saith, Surely I come quickly;” and let all who love him also love his appearing, and respond with the beloved apostle, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”*MISM January 1902, page 17.4*

February 1902

“Studies in the Gospel Message. A Vital Question Answered. Christ’s Death and Satan’s Destruction” The Missionary Magazine 14, 2.

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QUESTION: In *Hebrews 2:14, 15* we read that, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Christ “also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them that through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Why was it necessary for Christ to die, in order that Satan might be destroyed? *MISM February 1902, page 60.1*

Although there are many things in the work of salvation, for which we may not be able to give a reason, since they are beyond human comprehension, and all things will be better understood as the years of eternity roll by, this is a legitimate question, and one that may with reverence be answered; for the understanding of it is really necessary to our intelligently laying hold of the hope set before us. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.” The question on this text brings us to the study of the very heart of the gospel, - into personal touch with God in His secret place. *MISM February 1902, page 60.2*

Read the verse again carefully, and you will see that the deliverance of the children from bondage is coupled with the destruction of the devil. It is by the destruction of the devil that they are delivered. Christ died that He might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were subject to bondage. To understand the one is to understand the other. The deliverance from bondage is a present reality to every one who believes Christ, and so accepts Him; and to such the devil is already practically destroyed, since he has no power at all over those who are in Christ. Christ has “spoiled principalities and powers.” “In the faith” we may steadfastly resist the devil, so that he will flee from us. To the true disciple of Jesus, “power and authority”

are given “over all devils.” And now let us have a short lesson in the science of salvation.*MISM February 1902, page 60.3*

GOD’S MERCY IS HIS JUSTICE

God must be just, at the same time that He is “the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” *Romans 3:23*. He is just in all His sayings, and the judgment will show this. He will be clear when he judges. *Psalms 51:4; Romans 3:4*. Therefore the judgment must reveal the fact that He has never done anything arbitrary—nothing for which a reason cannot be given which will be understood by every created being, and will be perfectly satisfactory. If a single soul should be punished without the justice of his punishment being seen and acknowledged by him and by every other soul in the universe, there would be an opening for another rebellion similar to that of Satan. Every secret thing would not have been made known, and there would be room for the doubt to spring up in some mind, which the serpent insinuated into the mind of Eve, namely, that God does things merely to please himself, without any regard to His creatures. But this state of things can never be after the judgment. The revelation of God in the gospel will be so complete that there will be no room in any heart for doubt.*MISM February 1902, page 60.4*

SALVATION BY THE UNIVERSAL LIFE

It is by the life of Christ that we are saved. *Romans 5:10*. He is the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, and that was and is manifested in the flesh. The Word of life was manifested, in order that we might have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. *1 John 1:1-3*. The Gospel is simply the revelation of the life of God in Christ, and the formation of the life in us. Compare *Luke 2:10, 11* and *Colossians 1:27*.*MISM February 1902, page 61.1*

Remember now that all things are from God in Christ. He is the life. Without him there is not one thing in the universe. All things, both animate and inanimate, the mountains as well as men, we his offspring, the product of his life. In his hand “is the soul of every

living thing, and breath of all mankind.” God alone has life in himself, and it is his life that is manifested in every living creature. Nay, more, it is the power of his life that holds the particles of inanimate matter together, so that all the so-called “forces of nature” are but the varied manifestations of the working of the one life. The highest angel in heaven and the tiniest creature that finds its whole world in a drop of water, are alike dependent on that life for existence. Nothing has any life in itself, nor any life of its own; every act that is performed, every thought, every breath, every heart-beat, is by the power of the life of him in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” *MISM February 1902, page 61.2*

THE BURDEN OF SIN ON GOD’S LIFE

This is but a simple fact that must be acknowledged by every one who recognizes God as “the Former of all things,” and the upholder of the universe; yet it furnishes the solution to every question that can arise. Let us apply it to the case in hand. The deliverance of the children from bondage means the destruction of sin, and that means the destruction of the devil, “for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” He is the originator of sin, the father of lies. Now we can never know how it was that sin was first conceived in his mind, and we do not wish to (for it was not God’s design that we should ever know evil, and the gospel is for the purpose of getting us as far away from it as possible, and making us lose all knowledge of it); but one thing we do know, and that is that the sin that was first committed, and all that has ever been committed since, has been done with God’s life. But for the breath that God gives to us every moment, no one could have power to deny Him, or to take His name in vain. His life in us actually bears the sins that we commit. So it is a most literal truth that Christ “beareth the sins of the world.” God says: “Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities.” *Isaiah 43:24*. Therefore He adds: “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Sin is most hateful and disgusting to God, yet for our sakes he patiently endures it upon his life. “The long-suffering of our God is salvation.” But he is most anxious to get the burden of it off from his life, and in doing that he clears it from every one who consents to be identified with him. *MISM February 1902, page 61.3*

GOD TAKES THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SIN

You are doubtless familiar with the excuse that people make for their evil habits, when they try to throw all the responsibility for their sins upon the Lord, saying, "I did not make myself; I had no choice in being born as I was; if the Lord made me thus, how can I help it?" Now God has anticipated all that. It is not true that God has made us as we are, for his handiwork has been marred, and his image defaced; but since it is with his life that all the sin has been committed, he takes all the responsibility on himself. No; that is not quite correct; he had all responsibility on himself from the beginning, since he made man free to sin; we should more properly say that God did not throw off the responsibility for man's actions. He remained with him, going with him down to the depths, and charging no sin against him. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." *2 Corinthians 5:19*. The same principle applies to all sinners, as to Satan: If God had arbitrarily cut them off, it would not have been a revelation of his love and justice. He has a way of showing his abhorrence of sin, that is altogether different from man's way. Men show their abhorrence of an evil deed, by crying out against the transgressor, and cutting him off; God shows his abhorrence of sin by cutting himself off. If he had at the beginning destroyed the devil, that would have indicated his abhorrence of the individual, but some other creature would have taken up the devil's work of sowing discord, and would have said, just as men even now do, "God gave the devil life, and His life was all that the devil had with which to act, and therefore he was responsible for his actions; and now he has cut him off for that which he could not help." But God is love; he is justice; and he cannot deny himself; therefore it was not possible that he could destroy the devil, and still maintain his character before the eyes of the universe, without giving up his own life. In giving up his own life in Christ, he showed how greatly he hated the sin that had been brought upon it. Thereby he showed that He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." *MISM February 1902, page 62.1*

SIN PUT AWAY BY THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

Christ has appeared "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Hebrews 9:26. By himself he has made purification of sins. *Hebrews 1:3.* "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." *1 John 2:2.* The sins of the world were on him, and he could not have put them off without dying, except by denying himself, which he cannot do. But now, having given up his own life, thus showing not only his hatred of sin, but also the immutability of the law of righteousness, he has a new life, that has not been tainted by sin, to give to every one who will accept it. His grace is as free as the air we breathe, and therefore there is no excuse for anyone who does not accept the new life in Christ. Whoever clings to the old life of sin must necessarily go to destruction, suffering the same penalty for sin that God himself suffered. *MISM February 1902, page 62.2*

FORGIVENESS FREE FOR ALL

You say that this implies that forgiveness was offered even to Satan. Of course it does; who that knows the character of God can doubt it? It is true that the proclamation of the gospel has no reference whatever to him, and that he is not on probation, for the reason that the offer to him was made and rejected, and his place in heaven was forfeited, before man was created. The case of all the angels was decided, and "the angels that kept not their first estate," had departed from the light of heaven into "everlasting chains of darkness," before man saw the light. *MISM February 1902, page 63.1*

In being made flesh Christ "taketh not hold of angels." But the tender mercies of God are over all his works, and we may be sure that he did not allow "the anointed cherub that covereth" to leave his presence for ever, without making every effort possible to save him. That was to offer himself, which was the most perfect and the only way that he could disprove Satan's charge that he was mindful only of himself and regardless of others. It was not, however, merely to disprove Satan's charge, that God made the sacrifice. He did it because he is love, and love cannot be satisfied without the fullest and most perfect manifestation of itself. He did it not merely that certain lost ones might be saved, but that the millions of unfallen beings might have a sure ground of trust. Righteousness, which means forgiveness (see *1 John 1:9*), is the foundation of his

throne.*MISM February 1902, page 63.2*

Now the sacrifice has been made, and God has shown that He has no complicity with sin and is not in the remotest sense the accomplice of sinners, although all sin has been committed with his life. Now, having taken the responsibility of all sin upon himself, and having given his life as an atonement for it, he can justly destroy the one who originated it, and who has obstinately continued in it. Whoever continues in sin voluntarily chooses the death which the sinful life justly merits, and which God himself suffered. Through death Christ has won the right and power to destroy "him that had the power of death," and at the same time to deliver all who are bound.*MISM February 1902, page 63.3*

A FULL AND COMPLETE SALVATION

And right here comes in that which lifts this study out of the range of formal theological disquisition, and makes it most intensely personal and practical. Here is our encouragement: He who has won the power to destroy him that had the power of death, has won the power to abolish death itself. The offering was nothing less than the life that upheld the universe, so that the atonement having once been made, whosoever will may come. For His own sake God made the sacrifice, and whoever will consent to link his case with God's, to be identified with him, may share all his gain. Sin must be destroyed; but "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The offering once for all embraces all. God can save the whole world as easily as one soul. Will you accept as yours by right, deliverance from Satan's power, and take it now?*MISM February 1902, page 63.4*

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